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BOOK REVIEWS

METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

Prolegomena to History. FREDERICK J. TEGGART. (University of California Publications in History, vol. 4, no. 3.) Berkeley, 1916.

This critical inquiry into methodology is of direct interest to anthropologists. While by a historian and concerned with the labors of historians, it is written in the attitude that "Anthropology and History differ only in so far as each represents the use of a special investigative technique." The scope of the work is indicated by the sub-title: "The Relation of History to Literature, Philosophy, and Science."

After an introduction summarizing the conflict of opinion whether history is a science, and a preliminary chapter given to a definition of the method of what is universally admitted to be science, the author considers the relation of historical investigation and historiography—those inquiries performed in the field of history that lead, in intention at least, to something akin to science, and the writing of history that is often viewed as an art. These two endeavors he finds to be linked chiefly by community of material, and to be sharply distinct. The historiographer "selects" the facts to be included in his work in accordance with some personal localized view; and 'explains' events by the imaginative reconstruction of the character and motives of the participants." Though it is with nations and not with individuals that history is concerned, yet, as the group is only seen in named individuals, "there is an insistent tendency on the part of historians to lose the wider vision and follow the traditions of drama." Historiography is "no mere colorless product of scholarship. It is the mental reflection of the consciousness of national existence." "Intensity of personal feeling, inseparable from patriotism and politics," is what at once "gives history its specific quality" and "has remained the great obstacle to an historiographic art."

Section four deals with History and Philosophy, in which the thesis is upheld that historiography is ineradicably infected with a philosophical outlook, no less today when the idea of "the continuity of history" is heralded as the most fundamental principle of the discipline, than in the less systematized opinion of two millennia ago. This idea of continuity

is only a modern formulation of the view which affiliates history with philosophy and thereby prevents its becoming a science. No proclamation that history is a science makes it such; nor has any verbal repudiation excluded the philosophical tinge from the history-writer's efforts. History indeed claimed to be a science, but plainly has not produced scientific results. Logicians have realized this situation; and, in England, escaped from the dilemma by admitting the claim and justifying it by finding in the "comparative method" a scientific element in the history-writer's work; whereas German philosophers have accepted the claim literally and announced that history was a science of a distinctive type. But the mere employment of the comparative method has obviously been insufficient to put history on a status at par with the recognized sciences; and, on the other hand, the erection of history into a new kind of science does not free this "science" from an essentially aesthetic or philosophical end and course. The writing of history still aims substantially at the purposes of Thucydides—not in the least to be decried, and productive now and then of works of timeless quality; but insuperably unscientific in value. If such practice is the only form which the results of historical research may take, this research is only ancillary to philosophy. "The subordination of investigation to historiography carries with it the subordination of investigation to philosophical ideas." "The future progress of historical investigation turns upon the possibility of scholars being able to free their work from the domination of historiography."

This brings the author to his final section on History and Evolution, which is of special interest to anthropologists in that it considers whether "the processes manifested in the activities of mankind" can be systematically intelligible; in other words, whether cultural phenomena are capable of definite resolution into their factors besides being described as facts. In a brilliant and original analysis of the logical method followed by scientists of the organic and inorganic, especially Hutton, Lyell, and Darwin, toward the working out of the concept of evolution, the author seeks to find at least some hints that may be useful to scientists concerned with civilization. Not that Darwin's theory is adaptable "to an evolution for which it was not designed"; but its essential method may be applicable to new problems. How this application may be brought about, the author does not pretend to predict; except for a hint that the evolutionistic method of science is after all the extension, to a wider content, of the "comparative method" which historians and anthropologists have not left unattempted; and for a caution that the

evolutionary point of view may profitably center attention on the processes manifested in "fixity" as well as in those of "change," which have recently been accorded overwhelming interest.

There is then no positive conclusion; no royal road is pointed out. The little book remains within its purpose of being "Prolegomena." It deals, however, with problems which, whether we evade them or not, confront every anthropologist; and it outlines them with courage and a persistently critical spirit. That the work is written from the starting point of history, renders it almost the more stimulating to ethnologists, through imparting a freshness of presentation to an essentially identical task.

Two objections may be urged against the monograph. The first is the all too liberal use of citations. The quoted passages are apt, and constitute a convenient, perhaps even valuable, summary of opinions pronounced on the methodology of history; and their usefulness is enhanced by a full bibliography. But a constant skilful interweaving of citations with the text, and an occasional carrying on of the argument by successive juxtapositions of quotations, make difficulty for the reader, who soon finds himself wishing that the author had more sharply defined his own contribution by relegating incorporated matter to a visibly subsidiary place.

The other criticism concerns the actual recognition accorded to anthropology—its theoretical place in the author's opinion no ethnologist can cavil at. The anthropologists referred to are Maine, Lubbock, Tylor, Lang, Frazer, Hartland, M'Lennan, Myres, Marett,—and no others. Surely the day is past when this single closely knit series can be taken as representative of a study so diversified in aim, so unorganized in purpose even, as anthropology of today. Yet, if reproach is deserved, it is due far more to ourselves than to Professor Teggart. There is scarcely an ethnologist in this country, in France, or in Germany, who does not believe the narrow, simple method of the classic English evolutionary school to be sterile. That nevertheless only this school has been able to impress with its existence sincere students in allied branches, as well as the public, argues that it alone has consistently attempted or professed to solve wider problems. We may look down upon the solutions as superficial; but we must admit that the attempt has been earnest and gallant in spirit. Can we, who as the bulk of the profession hold aloof from this school, say as much for our endeavors?

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